

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in light of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 12-15 and 19-22 are requested to be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

This amendment deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-3, 5-11 and 16-18 are now pending in this application, of which claims 16-18 are withdrawn from consideration.

Allowable subject matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 1-3 and 5-11 are allowed.

Rejoinder of method claims

Applicants respectfully request rejoinder of method claims 16-18 in accordance with MPEP 821.04 and *In re Ochiai*, 71 F.3d 1565 USPQ2d 1127 (Fed.Cir. 1995). Applicants note that claims 16-18 contain all the limitations of allowed claim 1, and are thus in *prima facie* condition for allowance.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 12-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,017,611 to Cheng (hereafter “Cheng”). This rejection is moot in light of the cancellation of claims 12-15.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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